

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EURE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00 INRE-00

CIAE-00 PM-04 INR-07 L-03 ACDA-05 NSAE-00 PA-01 SS-15

PRS-01 SP-02 TRSE-00 SAJ-01 NSC-05 /057 W

----- 044411

O 101205Z SEP 75

FM AMEMBASSY ATHENS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 398

INFO USMISSION NATO IMMEDIATE

CINCUSNAVEUR IMMEDIATE

USCINCEUR IMMEDIATE

DIA WASHDC IMMEDIATE

USDOCOSOUTH IMMEDIATE

USNMR SHAPE IMMEDIATE

COMSIXTHFLT IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L ATHENS 6892

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR MILI GR US

SUBJ: PHIBLEX 3A-76 EXERCISE PROVOKES STATEMENTS BY PASOK

AND COMMUNIST PARTY LEADER: ATHENS PRESS CONTINUES TO  
COVER EXERCISE PROMINENTLY; NEW STATEMENT TO BE MADE BY  
GREEK GOVERNMENT

REF ATHENS 6844

1. THE AMPHIBIOUS EXERCISE IN GREECE BY US MARINES  
(PHIBLEX 3A-76) HAS CONTINUED TO BE A MAJOR IEM IN THE  
ATHENS PRESS. THE MANNER IN WHICH THE STORY IS TREATED  
HAS BEEN PREDICTABLE, I.E. THE COMMUNIST AND LIBERAL PRESS  
HAVE ASSUMED A CRITICAL STANCE WHILE THE MORE CONSERVATIVE  
PAPERS AFFORD A MORE MATTER-OF-FACT TREATMENT TO THE  
STORY. IN ADDITION, THE EXERCISE HAS PROMPTED THE ISSUANCE  
OF STATEMENTS BY BOTH PASOK LEADER PAPANDREOU AND  
COMMUNIST (INTERIOR) LEADER DRAKOPOULOS.

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2. PAPANDREOU'S STATEMENT ALLEGES THAT THE EXERCISE CREATES

THE "FEELING OF RIGHTFUL RAGE" AMONG THE GREEK PEOPLE.  
"AS THOUGH GREECE DID NOT SUFFER ENOUGH UNDER A SEVEN-YEAR  
OCCUPATION AND BY THE DIVISION OF CYPRUS AS RESULT OF THE  
"APPOINTEES" OF THE AMERICANS IN THE GREEK ARMED FORCES,"  
HE ALLEGED, "WE MUST NOW EXPERIENCE THE DIRECT MILITARY  
INTERVENTION OF OUR GREAT 'ALLY'." PAPANDREOU THEN SARCASTICALLY  
NOTED THAT IT IS FORTUNATE THAT GREEK OFFICERS WILL BE PRESENT  
AS "OBSERVERS" AT THE LANDING EXERCISE AND THE EXERCISE  
IS NOT TAKING PLACE IN THE ABSENCE OF THE GREEK ARMED FORCES.  
"CONSIDERING THE WAY THE GOVERNMENT HANDLES OUR NATIONAL  
MATTERS" EVEN THIS SHOULD NOT BE EXCLUDED, HE SAID.  
PAPANDREOU THEN ASSERTED THAT THE GOG MUST EXPLAIN TO THE  
GREEK PEOPLE WHAT NATIONAL INTEREST IS SERVED BY THE  
"UNACCEPTABLE AND PROVOCATIVE LANDING EXERCISE ON GREEK  
SOIL." HE SUGGESTS THE GOG SHOULD CEASE MOCKING THE  
GREEK PEOPLE AND ANSWER CLEARLY WHETHER OR NOT THE LANDING  
EXERCISE CONSTITUTES A PART OF THE NATO DEEP EXPRESS  
MANEUVERS.

3. THE STATEMENT OF COMMUNIST PARTY (INTERIOR) LEADER  
DRAKOPOULOS WAS Milder IN TONE. IT RECALLED THE FACT  
THAT THE GOVERNMENT HAD ANNOUNCED ONE YEAR AGO GREECE'S  
WITHDRAWAL FROM THE MILITARY ARM OF NATO AND CITED AS A  
"KNOWN FACT" THE ANTIPATHY OF THE GREEK PEOPLE TOWARDS  
AMERICAN MILITARY BASES AND THE GENERAL PRESENCE OF  
AMERICANS IN GREECE. AGAINST THE RECENT BACKGROUND OF  
THE "PARTIALITY IN FAVOR OF THE TURKS OF U.S. POLICY IN  
CYPRUS AND THE AEGEAN," DRAKOPOULOS NOTES THAT THE  
ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE AMPHIBIOUS EXERCISE OFFENDS THE  
SENTIMENTS OF THE PEOPLE. HE EXPRESSED CONCERN THAT THE  
EXERCISE MIGHT OPEN THE ROAD TO FURTHER CONCESSIONS TO THE  
U.S. BY THE GOG WITH THE RESULT THAT GREEK NATIONAL INTERESTS  
WOULD BE HARMED AND DEMOCRACY AND GREEK NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE  
FURTHER UNDERMINED. AS A RESULT, DRAKOPOULOS CALLED FOR  
CANCELLATION OF THE "1953 AGREEMENT" AND THE REVIEW OF ALL  
BILATERAL GREEK-U.S. MILITARY AGREEMENTS.

4. AMONG THE SEPTEMBER 9 AFTERNOON PRESS, VRADYNI  
(CONSERVATIVE, PRO-GOVERNMENT), ESTIA (CONSERVATIVE) AND  
APOYEVMATINI (PRO-GOVERNMENT) DOWNPLAY THE STORY AND MERELY  
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CARRY THE DEFENSE MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENT (REFTEL). HOWEVER,  
ATHINAIKI (PASOK/PAPANDREOU SUPPORTER) LED INTO ITS FRONT  
PAGE LEAD STORY WITH A BANNER HEADLINE READING "OTHER THAN  
THAT, GREECE DOES NOT BELONG TO NATO: LANDING EXERCISE OF  
AMERICANS ON GREEK SHORES: 'PACIFYING' ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE  
DEFENSE MINISTRY." THE STORY NOTED THAT THERE IS NO  
INDICATION AS TO THE SPECIFIC BILATERAL AGREEMENT WHICH  
JUSTIFIES THE EXERCISE AND ALSO TOOK CRITICAL AIM AT THE

FACT THE ANNOUNCEMENT WAS ONLY MADE ONE DAY BEFORE ITS COMMENCEMENT. FINALLY THE ARTICLE SUGGESTS THAT THE "NATIONAL INTERESTS" CITED MIGHT BE THE FORTHCOMING AID FROM THE U.S. TO GREECE. ELEFTHEROTYPIA (ANTI-AMERICAN) ALSO FRONT-PAGED ITS STORY AND SUGGESTED THAT THE GOG PROBABLY DID NOT WISH TO REJECT THE U.S. REQUEST FOR THE EXERCISE DURING THE TIME THAT THE QUESTION OF AID TO GREECE IS BEING DISCUSSED AND WHILE AN AMERICAN INTERVENTION AIMED AT ATTAINING AN ACCEPTABLE SOLUTION IN CYPRUS IS AWAITED.

5. OF THE MORNING NEWSPAPERS ON SEPTEMBER 10, KATHIMERINI (PRO-GOVERNMENT), AKROPOLIS (CONSERVATIVE) AND ELEFTHEROS COSMOS (JUNTA APOLIGIST) TREAT THE MATTER IN A FAIRLY NON-CONTROVERSIAL MANNER. RIZOPASTIS (COMMUNIST PARTY-EXTERIOR), HOWEVER, MAKES THE STORY THE MAIN ITEM ON PAGE ONE WITH A FIVE-COLUMN TITLE "AMERICAN LANDING IN GYTHION PROVOKES RAGE: GREECE REMAINS BOUND TO THE ORDERS OF NATO AND THE USA." IN AN INSIDE EDITORIAL, PRIME MINISTER CARAMANLIS IS DESCRIBED AS THE TRUSTEE FOR FOREIGN IMPERIALIST INTERESTS RATHER THAN THE DE GAULLE OF GREECE. SIMILARLY AVGHI (COMMUNIST PARTY-INTERIOR) GIVES THE EXERCISE A GOOD PART OF ITS FRONT PAGE AND ALSO CARRIES AN ACCOMPANYING CRITICAL EDITORIAL. THE HEADLINE READS "TODAY AMERICAN MARINES ATTACK: EXERCISE OFFENDS NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE."

6. COMMENT. THE AMBASSADOR WAS TELEPHONED EARLY THIS MORNING BY DEFENSE MINISTER AVEROFF FROM HIS HOME AFTER THE LATTER HAD SEEN THE MORNING PRESS -- WHICH HAD UPSET AND ANGERED HIM. THE AMBASSADOR HAS ALSO SPOKEN TO AVEROFF SEVERAL ADDITIONAL TIMES THIS MORNING IN AN EFFORT TO ASSIST HIM WITH A FURTHER PUBLIC STATEMENT ON THIS SUBJECT WHICH THE GREEK GOVERNMENT PLANS TO MAKE LATER TODAY. WE HOPE --  
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AND BELIEVE -- THAT THE GOG WILL MEET THIS CRITICISM HEAD-ON, AND THAT WHEN THE FUROR SUBSIDES THEY AND WE WILL HAVE ACCOMPLISHED ANOTHER IMPORTANT STEP TOWARD A MORE SATISFACTORY SET OF BILATERAL RELATIONSHIPS. KUBISCH

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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** PRESS COMMENTS, MILITARY POLICIES, MILITARY EXERCISES, PHIBLEX 3A-76, RELATIONS WITH REGIONAL ORGS  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 10 SEP 1975  
**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** CunninFX  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1975ATHENS06892  
**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** GS  
**Errors:** N/A  
**Film Number:** D750313-0547  
**From:** ATHENS  
**Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Image Path:**  
**ISecure:** 1  
**Legacy Key:** link1975/newtext/t19750964/aaaaceeo.tel  
**Line Count:** 158  
**Locator:** TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM  
**Office:** ACTION EUR  
**Original Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Page Count:** 3  
**Previous Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Previous Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Reference:** 75 ATHENS 6844  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Authority:** CunninFX  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 04 JUN 2003  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** RELEASED <04 JUN 2003 by CunninFX>; APPROVED <09 OCT 2003 by CunninFX>  
**Review Markings:**

Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
06 JUL 2006

**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Referrals:** n/a  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** PHIBLEX 3A-76 EXERCISE PROVOKES STATEMENTS BY PASOK AND COMMUNIST PARTY LEADER: ATHENS PRESS CONTINUES TO  
**TAGS:** PFOR, MILI, MOPS, GR, US, NATO  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006